

people have acquiesced in the destruction of their liberty, and the substitution thereof of a military government; that they are unfit to be free, and incapable of self government.

The necessity of self-preservation, therefore, now decrees our eternal political separation.

We, therefore, the delegates with plenary powers of the people of Texas, in solemn convention assembled, appealing to a candid world for the necessities of our condition, do hereby resolve and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended, and that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, Sovereign, and independent republic, and are fully invested with all the rights and attributes which properly belong to independent nations; and, conscious of the rectitude of our intentions, we fearlessly and confidently commit the issue to the decision of the Supreme arbiter of the destinies of nations.

Signed,

Richard Ellis, President of the Convention and Delegate from Red River.

Charles B. Stewart, Tho. Barnett, James Collinsworth, Edwin Waller, Asa Brigham, John S. D. Byrom, Francis Ruis, J. Antonio Navarro, Jesse B. Badgett, Wm D. Lacy, William Menifee, Jn. Fisher, Matthew Caldwell, William Motley, Lorenzo de Zavala, Stephen H. Everett, George W. Smyth, Elijah Stapp, Claiborne West, Wm. B. Scates, M. B. Menard, A. B. Hardin, J. W. Burton, Thos. J. Gazley, R. M. Coleman, Sterling C. Robertson, Geo. C. Childress, Bailey Hardeman, Rob. Potter, Thomas Jefferson Rusk, Chas. S. Taylor, John S. Roberts, Robert Hamilton, Collin McKinney, Albert H. Latimer, James Power, Sam Houston, David Thomas, Edwd. Conrad, Martin Parmer, Edwin O. Legrand, Stephen W. Blount, Jms. Gaines, Wm. Clark, Jr., Sydney O. Pennington, Wm. Carrol Crawford, Jno. Turner, Benj. Briggs Goodrich, G. W. Barnett, James G. Swisher, Jesse Grimes, S. Rhoads Fisher, John W. Moore, John W. Bower, Saml. A. Maverick (from Bejar), Sam P. Carson, A. Briscoe, J. B. Woods, H. S. Kimble, Secretary.

HONORING THE LIVES OF VETERANS KERRY DUDKEWIC, ARNOLD BOCKSEL, AND SEAMUS BYRNE

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lives of three veterans who passed away this past weekend.

Mr. Kerry Dudkewic of Smithtown, NY, was 62 years old and a Vietnam veteran and lost his battle with cancer on Friday, February 25, 2011. This past January he was finally given confirmation from the VA that his many ailments were indeed connected to his service and were caused by exposure to Agent Orange. Kerry knew he was very sick and wanted his wife to obtain survivor benefits upon his death. Kerry's commitment to serving others was exhibited throughout his life and I am so grateful I was able to help him in return before his passing.

Mr. Arnold A. Bocksel of Syosset, NY, was a 97-year-old WWII veteran and passed away on Sunday, February 27, 2011, of natural causes. Arnold survived the Bataan Death March and three and a half years in a Japanese prison camp. Arnold was awarded sev-

eral medals, including the Bronze Star and the Prisoner of War Medal. Arnold suffered from service-related injuries and in 2010 he was awarded a check from the VA to make his home handicapped-accessible. Arnold was truly a hero and I was so proud to help get him the support he earned and deserved.

Finally, Mr. Seamus Byrne of Smithtown, NY, was tragically struck by a car and killed on Sunday, February 27, 2011, while walking home with his wife Michelle after celebrating his 33rd birthday with friends. Seamus served with the New York Army National Guard Fighting 69th Infantry Regiment and was awarded a Purple Heart for injuries sustained while serving in Afghanistan. I am so saddened by this, knowing Seamus was finally getting his life back in order after his injuries and knowing his family was finally getting their husband and dad back to normal. Seamus is survived by his 10-year-old son Seamus, his 3-year-old daughter Ashley, and his wife, who is a nurse and tried to save him after he was struck.

Again, I am honored to have had these great men in our community and am grateful for the service they provided to our nation.

HONORING THE STATE OF TEXAS

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the State of Texas on the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Texas.

Texas Independence Day commemorates the adoption of the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico on March 2, 1836. Sixty delegates from across Texas signed the declaration. Its language in many ways parallels our nation's 1776 Declaration of Independence.

Only six days before the signing of Texas' declaration, 150 patriots under the command of Colonel William Barret Travis made their last stand against Santa Anna's Mexican army at the Alamo. Though vastly outnumbered, the Alamo patriots were committed to the cause of liberty for Texas. On February 24th, Colonel Travis dispatched arguably the most historic letter in Texas history, calling for reinforcements. "I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch," pleaded Travis.

The strength of character and commitment to freedom displayed by Colonel Travis and his men has endured in the hearts of every Texan throughout our 175 years as a Republic. It is this spirit that makes Texas great, and has allowed us to weather challenging times. More than ever, I think we could use a lot more of that undeniable Texas spirit and determination in Washington.

It is with great pleasure I take the time to recognize the great State of Texas on this monumental occasion.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY—175 YEARS AGO

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the unique history of the great state of Texas.

Today, March 2, marks Texas Independence Day.

On this day, 175 years ago, Texas declared its independence from Mexico and its dictator, Santa Anna, the 19th century Muammar Gadhafi.

In 1836, in the small farm village of Washington-on-the-Brazos, 54 Texans, as they called themselves in those days, gathered to do something bold and courageous: Sign the Texas Declaration of Independence and once and for all "declare that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, sovereign, and independent republic."

As these determined delegates met to declare independence, Santa Anna and 6,000 enemy troops were marching on an old beat-up Spanish mission that we now call the Alamo, where Texas defenders stood defiant, stood determined.

They were led by a 27-year-old lawyer by the name of William Barrett Travis.

The Alamo and its 186 Texans were all that stood between the invaders and the people of Texas.

And behind the cold, dark, damp walls of that Alamo, Commander William Barrett Travis sent the following letter to Texas requesting aid.

Here is what this appeal said in part: "To all the people of Texas and Americans throughout the world, I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannon fire for over 24 hours, but I have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion; otherwise the fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot, and the flag still waves proudly over the wall. I shall never surrender or retreat. I call upon you in the name of liberty and patriotism and everything dear to our character to come to our aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself for as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his honor and that of his country. Victory or death."—William Barrett Travis, Colonel, Texas Army.

After 13 days of glory at the Alamo, Commander Travis and his men sacrificed their lives on the altar of freedom March 6, 1836.

However, those lives would not be lost in vain. Their determination did pay off, and because heroes like Travis, Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie held out so long, Santa Anna's forces took such great losses they became battered and demoralized.

As Travis said, "Victory will cost them more dearly than defeat."

The Alamo defenders were from every State and 13 foreign countries.

They were black, brown, and white. Their ages were 16 through 67, and they were all volunteers.

They were mavericks, revolutionaries, farmers, shopkeepers, and freedom fighters; and